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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/829,387	04/22/2004	Hans-Juergen Schoenke	60291.000023	5401

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EXAMINER

SHARMA, RASHMI K

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3651

DATE MAILED: 04/20/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/829,387	SCHOENKE, HANS-JUERGEN	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Rashmi K. Sharma	3651	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 January 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-38 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 10-14, 35 and 36 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9, 15-34, 37 and 38 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>12/22/04</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Claims 10-14 have been withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected Group, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in the reply filed on 1/17/06.

Information Disclosure Statement

The information disclosure statement (IDS) submitted on 12/22/04. The submission is in compliance with the provisions of 37 CFR 1.97. Accordingly, the information disclosure statement is being considered by the examiner.

Drawings

New corrected drawings in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in this application because Applicant fails to describe each figure with respect a specified view (i.e. side, front, top etc.). Applicant is advised to employ the services of a competent patent draftsman outside the Office, as the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office no longer prepares new drawings. The corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The requirement for corrected drawings will not be held in abeyance.

The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the bar (15) being at a

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fixed height with respect to the surface of the conveyor belt, as in claim 3, the feed hopper of claim 17, sensors being height adjustable as in claim 6 and an acute angle as in claim 16 must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

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Claims 1-9, 15-34, 37 and 38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 1-9, 15-34, 37 and 38 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being incomplete for omitting essential elements, such omission amounting to a gap between the elements. See MPEP § 2172.01. The omitted elements are: an elongated magnetic device as claimed in claims 7, 24, 25 and 27-34. Without these elements, there is no way for the lids to be conveyed vertically without falling off the conveyor belt.

Claims 1-9, 15-34, 37 and 38 recite process steps (claim 1 lines 15-23 and claim 37 lines 13-21) within the apparatus claims. Correction is required.

Exactly how do the lids arrive at the collecting container (1) in order to be conveyed in the vertical direction along the conveyor.

Claim 37 recites "alternately" in line 19. This term deems the claim to be vague and indefinite. Isn't the discharge of wrong-positioned closures consistent, depending on the sensing of the position of each closure? Exactly what does Applicant intend to mean while using the term "alternatively"? Further clarification is required.

The claims are replete with a lack of antecedent basis errors. A few examples are: claim 1 lines 11 and 22 "the course"; claim 6 line 1 "the sensors"; claim 7 line 4 "the one strand"; claim 16 line 2 "the pivotable bearing"; claim 16 line 3 "the bearing"; claim 17 line 3 "the definition"; claim 23 "the region"; claim 24 line 4 "the more"; claim 25 line 1 "the second". Correction is required.

The term "above" in claim 1 line 12 and claim 37 line 11 is a relative term which renders the claim indefinite. The term "above" is not defined by the claim, the specification does not provide a standard for ascertaining the requisite degree, and one of ordinary skill in the art would not be reasonably apprised of the scope of the invention. How can bar (15) be above the conveyor belt? As depicted in the drawings, bar (15) is not above the conveyor belt. The bar (15) appears to be next to the conveyor belt, assuming the conveyor belt system is indeed vertical.

The term "an acute angle" in claim 16 is a relative term which renders the claim indefinite. The term "an acute angle" is not defined by the claim, the specification does not provide a standard for ascertaining the requisite degree, and one of ordinary skill in the art would not be reasonably apprised of the scope of the invention. Exactly how is this "acute angle" being measured? With reference to what structure? Further clarification is required.

The claims are replete with terminology that deems the claims to be vague and indefinite. Particularly, "same-lying" in claims 1 and 37; "this side and that side" in claims 7 and 8. Further clarification is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-3 and 37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Bonnet (US Patent number 6,189,702).

Bonnet discloses continuous conveyor belt (12, 15), sensor (204, 208) and discharge device (10) detecting wrong-positioned articles, articles being conveyed by two rows (see Figure 1), ejecting wrong-positioned articles laterally (into 13 and 16) and a bar (19 or 10) arranged at a fixed height above the conveyor belt and terminating after the sensor and discharge device (10).

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Rashmi K. Sharma whose telephone number is 571-272-6918. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gene Crawford can be reached on 571-272-6911. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


GENE O. CRAWFORD
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER

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